

OTHER SPECIAL NEEDS ACTIVITIES

The homeless section of this plan outlines the projects that directly address the needs of the homeless. In addition, the County is funding several projects that will address problems, which if left unaddressed, could cause homelessness. These projects will be funded with 2004 CDBG funds. The 2004 projects include:

Astor Home for Children – Adult Literacy

Family Services - Comprehensive Services for Families in Stress

Literacy Volunteers - Community Outreach

Child Abuse Prevention Center - Child Advocacy Center

REDUCE THE NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS BELOW THE POVERTY LINE

Federal guidelines state that the County must identify the CDBG projects that will help reduce the number of households below the poverty line. Generally, these programs address the needs of the homeless, reduce the risk of becoming homeless or provide necessary life skills training. 2004 CDBG funds will be used for the following programs that will help reduce poverty in Dutchess County:

Hudson River Housing - River Haven Shelter

Family Services - Comprehensive Services for Families in Stress

Grace Smith House - Northeast Shelter

Hudson River Housing - Program Services

Literacy Volunteers - Community Outreach

Astor Home for Children – Adult Literacy

MONITORING

The Department of Planning and Development is responsible for the administration of Dutchess County's CDBG and HOME programs. The County has developed monitoring systems for both programs.

Under the CDBG Program, the County conducts on-site monitorings of subrecipients including municipalities and public service agencies. Each year the County monitors approximately a dozen subrecipients. The County identifies subrecipients for monitoring by reviewing each project's progress and any concerns regarding implementation. Subrecipients who have had trouble implementing projects or have been identified as having compliance issues in previous monitorings are selected for the annual monitoring. During the monitoring visit, County program and financial staff reviews all files to ensure the subrecipient is complying with statutory and regulatory requirements, such as bidding and Davis Bacon. The staff also ensures that the subrecipients are keeping copies of all required documentation and reviews the accounting system. Monitoring results are forwarded to the subrecipient who must address concerns in a timely manner. The County also provides technical assistance during the monitoring to help subrecipients with the timely and accurate implementation of their projects.

CDBG infrastructure projects are closely monitored during their implementation. The County's Rehabilitation Specialist reviews all plans and specifications to insure compliance with applicable federal, state and local

laws and regulations. During construction the Rehabilitation Specialist inspects all projects before payment to insure that projects are completed according to the approved plans and specifications. The County's Principal Program Assistant is also involved during the implementation of these projects to insure compliance with all applicable regulations, particularly federal labor compliance regulations.

The County has also established a variety of monitoring systems for the HOME Program. All plans and specifications are reviewed and approved by the County's construction staff before the beginning of construction. The County's construction staff for the HOME Program is composed of the County's Rehabilitation Specialist and a consulting architect. The construction is also closely monitored with the construction staff approving all payment requests for HOME funds. The County's Housing Coordinator is also involved throughout the process to insure compliance with applicable federal, state and local regulations. After completion, projects are monitored as required by HUD regulations to ensure that property standards are maintained and the owner is complying with income and rent restrictions.

IMPEDIMENTS TO FAIR HOUSING/ELIMINATING BARRIERS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The 2003-2007 Dutchess County Consolidated Plan identified five policy areas that create barriers to the development of affordable housing throughout the County. It is the goal of the County's Department of Planning and Development to eliminate these barriers and encourage the development of safe, decent and affordable housing as needed by our low and moderate-income residents. The five main barriers to the development of affordable housing that the County has identified include:

- * Limited amount of land zoned for higher density housing
- * Failure of zoning ordinances to consider a variety of housing types
- * Excessive subdivision regulations and road standards
- * Excessive project review processes
- * Perception that affordable housing lowers adjacent property values

In January 2001 Dutchess County Executive William R. Steinhaus announced the formation of the Dutchess County Smart Growth Housing Task Force. The main purpose of the Task Force was to gather information on the current housing market, identify barriers to housing choice and make recommendations to alleviate the identified problems. The report was released in February 2002 and made several recommendations.

As a result of the Task Force report, the County Executive has asked the Department of Planning and Development to develop a Workforce Housing Coalition. The Coalition will be a consortium of governments, businesses, nonprofits and citizens interested in addressing the lack of workforce housing in our County. The focus of the Coalition will be to encourage the development of housing for households between 60-120% of the County median income. The Coalition will have three main components: development of workforce housing; employer-based education and downpayment assistance program and advocacy on workforce housing issues. The coalition will have a staff person funded by CDBG funds and a local foundation. The Coalition will partner with a local non-profit on the employer-based program and with the County Planning Department on the advocacy component. The ultimate goal of the program is to increase housing choices for all Dutchess County residents throughout Dutchess County.

The County will also continue to participate in the Dutchess Housing Consortium which has the goal of developing affordable housing for low income households and individuals. Although not specifically stated the Housing Consortium tends to focus on housing for household making between 0-60% of the county median income and those with special needs such as homeless, mental illness, substance abuse, and other disabilities.

Through these mechanisms we hope to increase the amount of inexpensive and moderately priced housing throughout the communities in our County and provide all Dutchess County residents with a wider variety of housing choices than are currently available.

EVALUATE AND REDUCE LEAD-BASED PAINT HAZARDS

Lead based paint has become a significant public health issue in recent years because of its potentially harmful impact on the health of young children. Dutchess County has limited data on lead-based paint poisoning. This data is reviewed in the latest Consolidated Plan.

The County's Department of Planning and Development does not have a specific lead-based paint abatement program. The removal of lead-based paint is addressed through our HOME Program. All lead-based paint is removed from projects rehabilitated with HOME funds. Additionally, HOME funds may be used to address lead-based paint problems in properties with a known lead-based paint problem. The County is currently working to develop the necessary capacity to comply with the HUD's new lead based paint regulations. The County Rehabilitation Specialist is a EPA certified Risk Assessor. We have also had one contractor attend the Lead Supervisor course and apply for their certification. We have recent received proposals from outside firms to do Risk Assessments and Clearance Testing. The County may contract out for Risk Assessment services because of liability issues. We continue to work with surrounding counties to develop our contractor capacity by coordinating contractor trainings.

INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

The County has developed a comprehensive institutional structure to participate in the implementation of the Consolidated Plan and the annual Action Plan. The County's Department of Planning and Development is the lead agency for this group that includes the public, municipal officials, private non-profit organizations, churches, community organizations, public housing agencies and other public agencies. The Consolidated Plan mailing list currently includes over 250 individuals and organizations.

The County insures that all members of this institutional structure are informed of their opportunities to participate in the development and implementation of the plans through extensive outreach. This process has been formalized in the Citizen Participation Plan in the Consolidated Plan. The full Citizen Participation Plan is available in the Consolidated Plan, pages 9-23.

COORDINATION

Coordination is a fundamental component in the implementation of the Consolidated Plan. It is essential that funding sources, government agencies and non-profit organizations coordinate their efforts to maximize the use of existing resources to address identified needs. This coordination is more essential then ever as both the County and the State address their budget shortfalls.

Coordination with other agencies is a prime consideration when the County reviews funding requests. Funding requests that appear to duplicate services are generally not recommended for funding. The County will help agencies, which are denied funding for this reason, network with other agencies providing similar services to help them address the needs of their client. The County has also increased its own coordination efforts through the use of a common human service funding application. This application is being used by two other significant funders, the County's Youth Bureau and the United Way.

Under the HOME Program, the County works extensively with private financial institutions to coordinate resources. All developers of HOME projects must maximize private financing since HOME funds are only available as gap financing. The County refers all potential applicants to private lenders and works closely with the lender and the developer to put together a viable financial package.

Coordination with other agencies and funding sources is also helped through County staff participation on several community committees designed to address specific housing and community development issues. Participation on these committees keeps the County informed about current housing and community development activities throughout the community. This knowledge is invaluable to the County when it attempts to coordinate its resources with the vast array of other resources available throughout the county.

PUBLIC HOUSING IMPROVEMENTS

Improvements to public housing projects can be achieved through a variety of funding sources and activities. These activities can include physical improvements to public housing units and programs that create opportunities for public housing residents. It is important to remember that this report covers only Dutchess County's CDBG and HOME funds. County HOME funds can be used for projects throughout Dutchess County because of the consortium formed between the City of Poughkeepsie and the County. County CDBG funds can only be used for Dutchess County projects outside the City of Poughkeepsie because the City receives its own allocation of CDBG dollars from HUD.

There are only two public housing authorities in Dutchess County, the Beacon Housing Authority (BHA) and the Poughkeepsie Housing Authority (PHA). A detailed discussion of public housing in Dutchess County is available on page 131-135 of the Consolidated Plan.

The BHA has received \$328,000 in capital financing to install a new generator at Forrestal Heights and install new windows in the low-rise family buildings. The PHA has significant needs. The PHA has privatized their two state subsidized complexes, Eastman Terrace and Bixby Apartments. They are also completing a variety of improvements at several complexes. They have recently taken over management of Tubman Terrace. Their needs are addressed through CDBG funds from the City of Poughkeepsie. Please refer to the City of Poughkeepsie's Consolidated Plan and 2003 Action Plan for details on the PHA 2004 rehabilitation projects.

Both the BHA and PHA are included in the County's outreach efforts as described in the Consolidated Plan's Citizen Participation Plan. They have been notified about the availability of HOME and CDBG funds to address their identified needs. The County will continue to outreach to the housing authorities in the future.